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Atari Online News, Etc.
A-ONE Online Magazine
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A-ONE #0219

05/12/00

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->From the Editor's Keyboard
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"Saying it like it is!"

I did have a lot to say this week! I had planned to talk about that foolish "ILOVEYOU" virus, the "proposal" by Microsoft to save itself, and a couple of items. However, with my increased work schedule, and a vicious week of allergies, I just don't have it in me to speak/write coherently tonight. This is the first year in many that I am suffering from various allergies. I've had minor bouts over the years that have been little more than a small cold-like episode, but this year has been horrendous. The worst of it is the many sinus headaches that medications don't seem to want to relieve. So, this week you'll be spared some various ramblings other than the above!

Until next time...

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Atari Classics Magazine - Final Clearance Sale!

OFFICIAL AC FINAL CLEARANCE SALE

We need the space for other stuff so we are completely clearing all remaining stocks of AC magazine, and are offering them for sale at just 1.00 UKP each including UK postage!!! (basically that's little more than the cost of P&P!). Matching Reader Disks for each issue are also available at 50p each, or get all the RD content on the Time.Capsule CD-ROM at just 1.00 UKP!

Surely the bargain of the year!

Atari Computing was the well respected A4 printed magazine which ran to 16 issues over a three-year period, finally closing at the end of last year.

The magazines built up into a library of useful articles, reviews and tutorials and remain an important part of Atari history.

If you order five copies or more we will throw in the Time.Capsule CD-ROM free of charge, or you can buy it on its own at just 1.00 UKP. It features AC articles and software as well as three excellent music tracks performed by Mark Wherry.

AC issues still available are everything apart from 1-3, 5 & 8.

This offer will close on 1st June and all remaining stocks of the magazine and disks/CD-ROMS will go into incredibly deep storage!!!

For full ordering details, and to check availability of certain issues (some are almost sold out) please email me at the following address:

publish@welshnet.co.uk

Non UK orders are welcome although postage will have to be charged at cost.
All orders dealt with on a first come-first served basis, so please don't
delay.

The sale really does have to end on the 1st June!

Mike Kerslake

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING
compiled by Joe Mirando
jmirando@portone.com

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Well, Mother Nature must have read my
last few columns. We had three 90+ degree days in a row this week here
in southern New England. It's not unheard of, but it's uncomfortable.
To make matters worse, those three 90+ degree days were followed by a
day of temperatures in the 50's. Now THAT'S a shocker.

SETI@home's TEAM ATARI has contributed almost seventeen years of CPU
time to the search for extraterrestrial intelligence. You can find info
on TEAM ATARI at the following URL:

http://setiathome.ssl.berkeley.edu/cgi-bin/cgi?cmd=team_lookup&name=team+atari

I'm sure that many of you are sick and tired of hearing about a
state-of-the-art scientific project that doesn't allow Atari computers,
but it's not only a very cool idea, but a whole new class of computing
project. And the computers that are participating comprise the largest
super computer in the world. If we ever do detect a signal from an
extraterrestrial intelligence, I'd love to be able to say that Atari
users helped out.

Meanwhile, we have people asking whether or not "Atari is dead". Atari,
never having been actually 'alive' cannot be dead. Atari will be alive as
long as any of us are using one of them. And even then, there are
emulators like GEMulator and WinSTon for Windows, and STonX for
Linux/Unix that can emulate an ST with varying degrees of speed and
compatibility. So we can, if we wish, use our beloved machines for a
long, long time.

Well, let's get on with the news, hints, tips, and info available on the
UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup
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Lyndon Amsdon posts his thoughts about the state of web browsers for the
Atari:

"I think the Milan crew should create a new web browser specially for
the Milan II only. Maybe a whole new set up with dialer, email

FTP, newsgroups, web browsing etc. all in one neat package. This should take advantage of the better hardware and show it off a little.

The Milan II is supposedly being made in co-operation with Motorola and a range of software developers are working on Milan gear like software, hardware add-ons and so on. Looks impressive. As someone said on another thread, there's no point buying a new computer if it only provides a speed increase and a higher graphics res if there is no software to push it to it's limits. I would seriously think about getting a Milan II if there was some real good software support.

A new browser to support HTML/Java (even Flash 4!) Maybe a new version of Cubase? (Atari have always had the musicians support since they launched the ST with midi ports and it'll be nice to see them come back using them in studios etc.)

I'm really hoping they can get this right and maybe one day in the future we'll all be surfing the net on a Milan II."

Steve Sweet tells Lyndon:

"I think Ford should re design the wheel, just for the sake of it, besides I'm fed up with round one's.

Properly written software should be hardware transparent, taking advantage of hardware is solely the job of the OS."

Henk Robbers tells Steve:

"These are very wise words.

Since a week I am the proud owner of a 25 Mhz Milan 040. The HD had a lot of stuff from the previous owner. Among which CAB 1.5 and doc's and magazines in html.

This CAB program (supposed to be able to run on a 1040ST) displayed the pages only slightly slower than Netscape on my Pentium 133. I considered the Pentium speed satisfactory. I use 8 bit colours on the Milan, TC on the pentium

What do you want, more? If this CAB was changed to make use of the differences between 68000 and 68040 (mainly addressing modes!) I guess it would only be a few % faster.

The important benefits of the Milan are the internal processor architecture, faster HD and faster graphic video card. *Not* the instruction set."

While on the subject of web browsers, Ryan Collins posts this thought:

"Why not write a proxy server that will take a complex web page and convert it into something easier that a lmeg ST can digest. It would convert JPEGs to a simpler graphics format, and automatically dither it. It wouldn't solve the Javascript problem, but it could offer SSL (at least from the proxy site, but it does open up a lot of security issues!)

This is how Web TV works, and one of the Palm (which only has a 68000!) web browsers (I think TopGun?)

It could actually become an open source project to allow all sorts of devices with limited hardware to access the web!"

George Crissmar tells Ryan:

"Properly written, a web page is supposed to be backwardly compatible all the way back to "text-only" browsers so that "limited hardware" (like cell phones, internet appliances, and browsers with disabled features) can still make use of the site.

Unfortunately, most web site authors write to "a browser" instead of to "the standard" (<<http://www.w3c.org>>, I think. Or maybe it's .com....) which is the root cause of the problem."

Ryan tells George:

"But it would be nice for the graphics to be simplified, then we are not stuck looking at the [Alt] tags, but could see some version of the graphics.

There is also a site to "buddy" certify your web pages so they are accessible to alternate web browsing software such as screen readers for the blind, but I don't see too many people adopting that either.

A proxy solution is probably the only way I'll ever be able to browse the web with graphics on my 800XL also!!"

Didier Mequignon posts:

"The latest version of Aniplayer is on my site (<http://aniplay.atari.org>), about news there are:

- A playlist.
- A vu-meter.
- All dialogs in window.
- Statistics for audio files (AVR/WAV/AIF/RA/MP1/MP2/MP3).
- DAT frequency (48KHz) used with an external clock (FALCON).
- And more..."

Adrian Haigh-Hutchinson asks for help with a CD-ROM:

"Recently I was upgrading my mate's Atari by putting an extra hard drive in - unfortunately the GE Soft Adapter then ceased to recognize any of the drives at all. Solved this but the d*mned thing now won't access the CDRom at all.

The software that was setup (GESoft v3) refused to see any drives so I installed ICD Pro and then the hard drive was back - I was using ExtenDos Pro 2.4B to drive the CDRom.

I have found out that the CDRom is a SCSI-2 device -- would this be the source of the problems?

Any help would be greatly appreciated."

Peter Schneider tells Adrian:

"Try 'CD Tool'. I never encountered a CDROM drive not recognized by that software. Though there might exist one (maybe two) :-)

And 'hide' your drive from the disk driver!"

Adrian asks Peter:

"Where can I get a copy of CD Tool please?"

Martin Graiter tells Adrian:

"CD Tool is the sister program to SCSI Tool and commercial.
See if you can dig up something similar here:

<ftp://ftp.funet.fi/pub/atari/> "

Gerhard Stavenhuter asks a 'newbie' question:

"This is probably a newbie question and I've tried seriously to find the FAQ, but could not find it.

I can copy atari-files from an Atari-floppy to my pc thanks to gemxplor.exe.
But how can i copy files from my pc to my Atari 1040 ST?

I have Cubase running on my Atari and a keyboard attached to it. Now i want to play some midi files I downloaded from the internet to my win 98 pc on my keyboard, but the pc won't write on Atari formatted floppies and the atari won't read pc-floppies. Any suggestions?"

Stephen Moss tells Gerhard:

"First the floppy has to be MS DOS formatted, do this by formatting it on your PC, and remember you have to format as 720K not 1.44MB

The problem with Win 95/98/NT is that they use long filenames which the ST can't handle, this is because it uses an extra portion of the File Allocation Table (FAT) called VFAT to store them. When the ST reads the disk it does not expect this area of the FAT to be used and therefore displays the Disk damaged/Drive not connected alert box.

AFAIK there are only two ways around this, the first is to have e-mail on both computers (with different addresses) and send the files between them as e-mail attachments, the second is to upgrade the OS to MagiC 6 which does handle long filenames and therefore the Win 95/98/NT VFAT entries, IIRC you can run it on 521K ST so you should be ok with a 1040 though to get the best from it a ram upgrade is required if you want to run a 1 meg application under MagiC, and you will need a hard drive unless you want to keep loading it from the floppies every time you need it.

You should be able to get a copy of Magic 6 from System-Solutions at <http://www.system-solutions.co.uk> "

Well folks, that's it for this week. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - E3 Has Games Galore!  
    " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " "  
                                PlayStation 2 In October!  
                                Sega Drops Price On Dreamcast!  
                                bleem! Dreamcast Plays PSX Games!  
                                And much more!
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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!

Sony Sets North America Launch Date for Playstation 2

Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. said on Wednesday it planned to launch its PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system in North America on Oct. 26 with an initial shipment of 1 million units.

The company, a unit of Sony Corp., said in an announcement at the Electronic Entertainment Expo here that the system would have a suggested retail price of \$299.

PlayStation 2, which has been lauded in the gaming press for its super-fast graphics and realistic three-dimensional images, was released in Japan earlier this year. The initial shipment will be followed by an additional 2 million units through March 31, 2001, the company said.

To date 1.8 million units have been sold in Japan.

"The overwhelming success of the product launch proves that the market is ready for PlayStation 2, as we chart a path toward the future of networked digital entertainment," said Ken Kutaragi, the company's president and chief executive officer.

Sony said that currently 208 publishers/developers have signed license agreements and more than 270 software titles are in development worldwide. The company said the new system also supports the existing PlayStation software catalog of more than 800 titles now on the market.

Sega: An Extra Life In Online Play?

Is it game over for Sega? Or will its push into online play vault the company to the next level?

With 2 million Dreamcast systems on the market and a preemptive first move into online gaming, the new Sega.com is sending the industry a message: The fat lady has not yet begun to sing.

"Sega is no longer about hardware," said Sega of America spokesman Charles Bellfield. "Our new focus is on ISP revenue. With a 2-million-user installed base -- all with 56K modems -- and projections for about 4 million (Dreamcasts sold) in the next financial year, online gaming is our future."

After a Feb. 1 restructuring of Sega, the industry finds the once-dominant games company divided into two divisions: Sega of America, the sales and distribution arm of the company; and Sega.com, the online gaming part of the company.

With the creation of an entire company dedicated to bringing console gaming online, Sega hopes to find renewed life.

But that future may be bleak considering the other players in the market. Sony with its 23 million users and Nintendo with its 9 million players certainly have more pull, and Microsoft's entry next year makes Sega somewhat of a small fish in a pond full of big ones.

Yet PC Data analyst Matt Gravett agrees that the future of gaming is online, and that Sega is well positioned in that regard.

"Sega is out there doing it first," he said. "If they can crack it before Sony and Nintendo, they will have a big advantage."

While prior online gaming efforts such as Nintendo's SNES and Sega's Saturn failed, the difference this time around is that the gaming experience is more immersive now -- with improved graphics and a faster and easier-to-use interface for getting into multiplayer mode.

The Dreamcast network should also prove to be a major benefit. All the Dreamcast units on the market have integrated 56K modems, which will help ensure a level playing field among users.

Sega.com is also counting on the current sports-friendly Dreamcast audience to get hooked on the network and multiplayer mode.

At this week's E3 show in Los Angeles, Sega.com will announce the availability of "NFL 2K1" and "NBA 2K1" as the first among its new titles. Also available will be "Quake 3 Arena," "Fantasy Star Online," "Half Life" and "Unreal Tournament." Strategy games are expected later this year.

As is customary for a platform company, Sega.com is focusing on distribution and doing what it can to prevent any obstacles to entry, including price -- hence the lack of a local hard disk drive, which would drive up the unit cost, said Sega's Bellfield.

"A hard drive would be too expensive," he said. "We will have a Zip drive, so if you are a consumer and you are downloading levels and you can take it out of your system and swap it with a friend. I would encourage free games through this medium."

Sega Drops Price on Dreamcast by \$50 With New Rebate

Sega of America, the No. 3 developer of video games, said on Thursday that it will drop \$50 from the current price of its Dreamcast console, in the

form of a connectivity bonus, bringing the price to \$149.

Sega announced at E3, one of the video game industry's biggest trade shows, that the bonus will take effect on June 4, and last until August 31. It is part of Sega's big push into online gaming, in an effort to distinguish itself from the increasingly cut throat competition in the \$7 billion U.S. video game industry.

Last month, San Francisco-based Sega of America formed a new unit Sega.com, to focus on online games, and a network, SegaNet, to be provided by a yet-to-be named Internet service provider.

In addition to the \$50 bonus, Sega customers will also receive a free one-month subscription to SegaNet.

The company, which will face tough competition later this year from Sony Corp.'s PlayStation 2 and new systems from Nintendo and Microsoft Corp. next year, already announced in April that it will give customers rebates of \$200, if they sign up for a two year subscription to SegaNet, which will cost \$21.95 a month.

SegaNet is a high-speed online gaming network, which will go live in August with an official marketing launch Sept. 7.

At E3, Sega was demonstrating several of its online games, using regular Internet access speeds of 56 kilobytes a second, at its massive booth, including "'Quake III Arena," "'Sega Sports NBA 2K1" and "'Sega Sports NFL 2K1." Some E3 attendees in the Sega booth played against each other as they sat side by side at separate Dreamcast stations, while others played unknown gamers over the Internet.

"'We can do narrowband today," said Charles Bellfield, director of communications at Sega. On Wednesday, Sony Computer Entertainment of America said it plans to develop a broadband network for high speed Internet access to entertainment content with other partners, but it gave few details about its plans.

Most analysts were expecting Sony or Nintendo, both of whom have aging, older generation systems on the market, to announce price cuts on their \$99 systems, but few predicted Sega moves.

"'The price move they made was very positive," said Gregory Fischbach, chairman and chief executive at Acclaim Entertainment Inc., a video game developer based in Glen Cove, N.Y. "That will sell a lot of software at Christmas."

Bleem Brings Playstation Games to the Dreamcast

bleem! for Dreamcast Delivers 400 New Titles To
Sega Dreamcast Gamers

bleem, inc. today unveiled bleem! for Dreamcast,. a new line of products which gives game-hungry Sega Dreamcast owners the ability to play hundreds of titles originally written for the Sony PlayStation as they've never been seen before, with Dreamcast-enhanced graphics resolution and effects. The announcement more than quadruples the choices available to Dreamcast gamers, with support for over 400 PlayStation titles planned for initial

release. The software products will be offered in 100-game ``paks," offering full compatibility with a range of popular PlayStation titles including Sony's own best-sellers, which were previously unavailable for any other console.

``bleem! for Dreamcast knocks down barriers between game consumers and the titles they want to play," said David Herpolsheimer, president and CEO of bleem, inc. ``Our new line expands the market for PlayStation games with millions more prospective users, plus allows Dreamcast owners to pick from hundreds more quality titles without giving up the improved graphics they expect from a next-gen console."

bleem! for Dreamcast takes advantage of the ``next generation" hardware in the Dreamcast console to improve the ``look" of PlayStation games, rendering game graphics at 640x480 pixels twice the resolution of most PlayStation games. Further, bleem! uses the Dreamcast's graphics processing power to make even older games look brand-new; enhancements like full-screen anti-aliasing and bi-linear filtering give PlayStation games improvements even the PlayStation 2 can't touch.

``Enhanced graphics are what sets bleem! apart," said Randy Linden, chief technical officer and creator of the bleem! technology. ``If all we did was play PlayStation games at PlayStation resolutions, there wouldn't be much point -- you could just get a PlayStation. That's why we concentrated on using the Dreamcast hardware to unlock the true potential in these games we wanted to deliver the best of both worlds by adding the Dreamcast's superior graphics to the proven gameplay in these titles, for a seamless -- better -- gaming experience."

With a planned retail price of just \$19.99, the bleem! for Dreamcast ``bleempaks" are expected to appeal to a wide range of videogame consumers. ``We've always been about offering the best product we can at a price gamers can afford. Our goal was to set the price low enough so that gamers could get bleem!, and a game to go with it, for about the price of a new title," said Herpolsheimer.

In addition to sales to existing Dreamcast owners, Herpolsheimer expects the new line to push many ``fence sitters" toward the Dreamcast console. ``There's really no excuse to not own a Dreamcast now. With top-selling PlayStation games selling for around \$20 and Sega's new "free Dreamcast" program, you can walk out of the store with a new Dreamcast, plus bleem!, and four best-selling PlayStation games for less than the cost of a new PlayStation."

Each bleem! for Dreamcast pak will feature a mix of the top-performing games from multiple genres, including adventure, sports, RPGs, strategy and other categories. Specific game lists for the individual packs will be announced in early June, with the first bleem! for Dreamcast paks expected to hit retail shelves early this summer.

bleem's first product, bleem! for the PC, was launched in May 1999 and has been well received by PC gaming enthusiasts worldwide, with over 250,000 copies sold to date.

From Pac-Man to Action Man, Hasbro Interactive
Unveils the Hottest New PC and Video Games At
the Electronic Entertainment Expo

Hasbro Interactive cuts the ribbon on an impressive line-up of PC and video games that build on the most sought after legacy game titles and licensed properties in the game industry. The FROGGER, PAC-MAN, MONOPOLY TYCOON, ACTION MAN, X-COM games are just a few of the titles Hasbro Interactive will unveil at Electronic Entertainment Expo.

X-COM is back in the X-COM: ALLIANCE game, a new installment in the popular franchise that brings back the thrill of the X-COM UFO Defense game in a totally new first-person perspective. It's 2062 and an unexplained phenomenon has transported your spaceship, the UGS Patton, to an unknown region of space - directly into the middle of a raging alien war. X-COM Alliance packages the most intense gameplay yet seen in the acclaimed X-COM series. Combining first-person perspective, strategy and role-playing genres, players will come face to face with the alien enemies, including the dreaded Sectoids, that X-COM fans have come to know all too well, in a new experience, pitting man against alien in a full-blown encounter for survival and dominance. Platform: WINDOWSfi 95/98; Available: Fall 2000.

FROGGER, the adventurous amphibian that has sold over 4 million units worldwide, is better than ever! The FROGGER 2: SWAMPY'S REVENGE game comes with dozens of great new levels spread over wild environments. New characters, including FROGGER'S female friend LILLIE FROG and a nasty crocodile named Swampy, keep FROGGER's world jumping! With vivid 3-D graphics, the FROGGER 2 game is ready to take hopping to a new level! Platforms: WINDOWS 95/98 and PlayStation game console; Available: Fall 2000.

The classic maze game of the 1980s returns in full 3-D action with the all-new PAC-MAN: ADVENTURES IN TIME CD-ROM! The story: Five Magical Power Pellets that keep PAC-MAN's planet alive have been stolen and scattered across time by his archenemies - the Ghosts. PAC-MAN's quest is to retrieve the five Magical Power Pills from the different eras - from ancient Egypt to the Wild West of the 1800s - and return them to the planet core before it cools. But watch out! There is almost always a ghost hot on PAC-MAN's tail! Platform: WINDOWS 95/98; Available: Fall 2000.

Dream it, build it and own it with Hasbro Interactive's MONOPOLY TYCOON game. You decide what and where to build in an incredible 3-D city. See a city of MONOPOLY properties come to life as you buy real estate, construct buildings and have fun watching your city grow while you compete against up to three other computer or online opponents. Compete with anyone on the Net to be mayor and the biggest real estate tycoon in the city. Interact with the characters in the game and read their thoughts to help formulate strategies! Platform: WINDOWS 95/98; Available Fall 2000.

Hasbro Interactive continues its line of TV game shows with perennial favorites. The FAMILY FEUD interactive game stars Louie Anderson as the host of a game that pits player-assembled families to a test to see who knows the most about what people surveyed on topics said. The WHEEL OF FORTUNE 2nd EDITION game brings back the lovely Vanna White in the long-running guess-the-phrase game show that has proven so popular. The JEOPARDY 2nd EDITION game features Alex Trebeck as moderator in the longest running quiz show on television. All game show titles: Platform: WINDOWS 95/98 and PlayStation; Available Fall 2000.

Jump into the futuristic 3-D world of NASCAR racing with the NASCAR RACERS game (ages 6 and up)! Kids race with TEAM FASTEX or REXCOR and live out the adventures they see on the TV show! And the racing fun doesn't end there... ith the NICKTOONS RACING game (ages 6 and up) it's a wild cross-country

race with all your favorite Nickelodeon cartoon character to see who will be the ``King of all Cartoons." The fast-paced action continues with the ACTION MAN: MISSION XTREME (PlayStation) and RAID ON ISLAND X (PC) games! Making his U.S. and TV debut this fall, ACTION MAN takes kids on real-live action adventures while conquering evil and becoming ultimate action heroes! The fun orbits into outer space with the TONKA SPACE STATION game (ages 5 and up)! Kids are challenged to assemble, maintain and protect their very own space station with Tonka Joe by their side to help. All titles: Platform: WINDOWS 95/98 and PlayStation. Available Fall 2000.

CD-ROM Playsets

Hasbro Interactive is continuing to lead the interactive game industry with the introduction of four more of the company's innovative and award-winning CD-ROM Playsets. The 2000 line-up includes: TONKA DIG 'N RIGS, BARNEY MAGICAL MUSIC PLAYSET, TONKA POWER TOOLS and PLAYSKOOL STORE playsets. The CD-ROM playsets (WIN 95/98) are suitable for ages 3 and up and combine hands-on toy play with the magic of multimedia software. Available Fall 2000.

Hasbro Interactive Introduces the Sequel to Its Best Selling Action Game Ever - FROGGER 2: SWAMPY'S REVENGE

Fun-loving FROGGER takes his biggest leap yet into the wild world of Hasbro Interactive's FROGGER 2: SWAMPY'S REVENGE - only this time he is not alone. New playable characters, enhanced powers and 21 exciting levels take FROGGER through a crazy ride of classic action/adventure gaming for the PC and PlayStation game console.

Building on the success of the ninth best-selling PC and fourth best-selling PlayStation game of 1999, the lovable FROGGER character returns in FROGGER 2 to fight evil Swampy the Crocodile and rescue the innocent baby frogs that Swampy has taken hostage. FROGGER's smart and sassy girlfriend, Lillie Frog, has joined him in the quest to hunt down Swampy and rescue the baby frogs, which happen to be her younger siblings.

``Since joining the Hasbro Interactive family, FROGGER has been a cornerstone brand providing its loyal fan base of casual gamers hours of classic game play," said Hasbro Interactive President Tom Dusenberry. ``Now in the next evolutionary step for this popular character comes FROGGER 2, which I have personally had the opportunity to watch grow, and has introduced a whole new level of play to FROGGER's world."

FROGGER 2 gives players a variety of action gaming options. Traversing seven themed environments including Garden, Ancients, City, Subterranean, Lab, Space and Halloween, players can choose to take the role of FROGGER or Lillie while encountering enemies. With improved superhop, power-croak and bug-seeking tongue powers FROGGER is set to conquer these wild environments and foil Swampy's plans.

``FROGGER 2 is the next generation in casual game play," said Chris Down, Hasbro Interactive's Executive Producer on the title. ``We have added a new dimension in exploration and discovery with the introduction of new characters, environments and heightened powers offering FROGGER fans more fun than ever before."

Intuitive game play and a well structured learning curve that allows novices to explore expert levels makes FROGGER 2 a game that anyone and everyone can pick up and play. Multiplayer action for up to four players pits male against female, young against old, or toad against tree frog.

FROGGER 2 can be experienced during the Electronic Entertainment Expo May 11-13 in the Los Angeles Convention Center, booth #946 in the South Hall. For more information please visit www.hasbro-interactive.com.

Everyone's Favorite Undead Hero Resurrects to the
PlayStation Game Console In MediEvil II

Sony Computer Entertainment America Inc. announced the nationwide release of MediEvil II, available exclusively for the PlayStation game console. Utilizing the fundamental game structures found in the original MediEvil, MediEvil II delivers a great balance of exploration, puzzle-solving, battle and platform elements, interspersed with a healthy dose of offbeat humor.

Sir Daniel Fortesque is back as the undead hero, and he is as valiant as ever. In MediEvil II, players must dare to take an eerie romp on the dark side, as they venture through the streets of Victorian London, 500 years after the triumph in Gallomere. Zarok's spell book has fallen into the hands of the evil occultist Lord Palethorn, and once again the spell is unleashed upon the land making the dead walk the earth, magnifying evil, and creating an untold number of foul demons.

"MediEvil II offers a gothic mix of originality, humor and puzzles, which will appeal to gamers both new and familiar with the MediEvil franchise," said Ami Blaire, director, product marketing, Sony Computer Entertainment America. "This long-awaited sequel is exceptional in detail and gameplay, creating a true cinematic experience for all PlayStation gamers."

Developed and created by Sony Computer Entertainment Europe's Cambridge Studios, MediEvil II features all-new challenges and amazing gameplay with new moves, more playable characters and technological advancements. Players will experience more subquests and mini-games which involve battling massive prehistoric demons, helping Sir Daniel Fortesque ("Sir Dan") stay attached to his limbs in a bizarre boxing match, and much more. With a numerous arsenal of weapons including a Gatling gun, bomb, blunderbuss, pistol, torch and more, and playable characters including DanHand, HeadlessDan and Dan-kenstein modes, players will be fully armed to defeat Lord Palethorn and his henchmen.

MediEvil II will transport players into a spooky, imaginative world with unmatched moods, atmosphere, visual appeal and compelling music. As players take on the role of Sir Dan and set out to stop Lord Palethorn, they will encounter evil characters such as Jack the Ripper, a star-struck Count and a brutish Frankenstein, clumsy zombies, fat bearded women, sneaky imps and other bizarre monsters.

Other new characters include a mad professor who advises Sir Dan on his various missions; a sexy Egyptian mummified princess who becomes Sir Dan's love interest and distracts him from his cause; Winston, a fast-talking, all-knowing help ghost; and The Spiv, a wheeling-dealing salesman who rewards Sir Dan with new weapons.

The independent Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) rates MediEvil

II ``T" for ``Teen." For more information about the ESRB, visit www.esrb.org.

Electronic Arts Announces SimTheme Park is On Its Way
to the PlayStation 2 Computer Entertainment System

Step right up, the fun is about to begin. Electronic Arts announces that it will be bringing its popular SimTheme Park franchise to the PlayStation2 computer entertainment system. Using the power of the PlayStation 2 console, SimTheme Park takes a massive stride forward with high-resolution graphics that will truly bring the theme parks gamers create to life. SimTheme Park will take advantage of the more sophisticated technological capabilities of Sony's new console system and allow players to build (and ride) bloodcurdling five-loop roller coasters in the most realistic way. Players will still be able to control every aspect of the parks they build, from the rides, to how much salt gets put on the French fries at the concession stand to chucking out troublemakers. But with the increased processing power and memory of the PlayStation 2, a larger number of customers will be able to visit the theme parks players create, each with their own individual personalities - complete with likes and dislikes.

Players will be able to create their definitive SimTheme Park experience among eight challenging environments, spread across four different and exciting themes - Lost World, Halloween World, Space Zone and Wonder Land. Each level provides a different set of challenges for the player as the visitor's tastes change and they become more and more discerning. Players will have to wander through their parks to explore their own creations from a visitor's perspective to ensure everyone is having fun. Along the way they'll be able to play interactive mini-games that will be hidden throughout SimTheme Park for the players to find.

SimTheme Park is being developed by Bullfrog Productions Ltd. and will ship later this fall.

Save The Planet From Insect Invasion In Acclaim's
ARMORINES IN PROJECT S.W.A.R.M

Acclaim Entertainment announced that Armorines: Project S.W.A.R.M for the PlayStation game console will arrive in stores beginning today. Based on an original Acclaim comics' property, Armorines: Project S.W.A.R.M is a first-person action game that centers on an elite fighting force of Marines charged with saving the world from an invading swarm of immense alien insects bent on colonizing Earth.

``Armorines in Project S.W.A.R.M takes 3D PlayStation games in a new direction by being one of the first to feature mission-based cooperative gameplay," said Evan Stein, marketing director at Acclaim Entertainment. ``This attribute allows for unlimited replayability, and gamers can look forward to never playing missions the same way twice!"

The Armorines storyline is set in 21st Century Earth and centers on an alien race fighting for survival, as their home planet can no longer support them. Looking to the stars for the answer, the aliens discovered a small green and blue planet that was too good to be true. Undetected by

humans, breeding pods carrying the aliens landed on Earth and began to colonize the planet. Earth's own military forces are powerless against the aliens due to the deadly toxins emitted by this horrific enemy. Humans have resorted to their last hope in the fight to save Earth from alien colonization - an elite military team wearing a highly advanced suit of armor.

Gamers will journey with one of two Armorines characters, Private Lewis and Private Lane, through multiple environments and secret worlds including: a Siberian Military base, where gamers must battle pollution and a heavy onslaught of alien bugs; the South American Jungle, where jungle bugs abound in an ancient Inca settlement; a Volcanic Island, where alien creatures must be eradicated from the depths of a steaming, lava-ridden volcano; the Egyptian Desert, where gamers confront alien bugs in the Valley of The Kings; and the Alien Hive, which features an asteroid-like spacecraft that carries thousands of alien insects to Earth. As players complete each level, additional secret worlds with tougher alien opponents will be revealed.

Armorines In Project S.W.A.R.M also features a wide range of multiplayer options including an outstanding co-operative mode that allows gamers to grab a friend and play single player missions in split screen mode. Enlistees will have to survive much tougher missions and incredibly clever alien attacks in order to prevail.

Armorines In Project S.W.A.R.M will be supported by a comprehensive marketing campaign that will reach hard-core gamers and the mass market alike. A multifaceted print campaign, begun months ago, is in place in all gaming publications and an online banner program on key gaming sites is also planned. The Acclaim.com site will feature key story and character information, screenshots, enemies, Quicktime videos, comic art and other appropriate news and facts about Armorines. The site can be accessed by directing your Web browser to www.acclaim.com.

Electronic Arts Goes Behind Enemy Lines With
DreamWorks Interactive's Medal of Honor
Underground, the Next Chapter to the Popular
World War II-Inspired Game for the PlayStation

Vive la Resistance! Liberate France from the German stranglehold in Medal of Honor Underground, the next chapter in the successful Medal of Honor story, the first WWII-themed first-person action adventure title for the PlayStation from DreamWorks Interactive(tm) released last year. The latest incarnation puts players in the role of Manon, the young member of the French Resistance introduced as Jimmy Patterson's "control" in the original Medal of Honor. Set prior to the start of the original Medal of Honor game, Medal of Honor Underground gives players a sense of the courage it took to survive in occupied France with D-Day four long years away. Medal of Honor Underground will be available for the PlayStation this Fall.

Medal of Honor Underground begins in 1942, not long after Germany crushed the French military and overran the country. Gamers are introduced to Manon who has just witnessed her house destroyed and hometown occupied. With nothing left to lose, she joins one of the many clandestine resistance movements that have taken root throughout her homeland during the early days of the occupation. Over the course of the game players will experience

her ascent from a naive volunteer to a seasoned veteran who is ultimately recruited by the Americans for the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), where she will eventually play a key role in the Liberation of Paris.

The game's headquarters will be an underground French Resistance command post located in the converted basement of an innocuous-looking French bakery. Players will use the command post as a base of operations and springboard for each of Medal of Honor Underground's seven missions encompassing more than 22 levels. Each mission offers specific objectives and numerous challenges to meet in terms of infiltration, execution and escape. These will take place in France, North Africa, Greece, Germany and Italy. The final mission of the game will send Manon back to Paris to assist in the liberation of her countrymen. Medal of Honor Underground will stay true to all the gameplay features that made the original one of the most acclaimed and best-selling games released in 1999, as well as introduce new features that will make for a thrilling, hair-raising experience. Expanded features in Medal of Honor Underground include enemy vehicles such as tanks and motorcycles, even smarter artificial intelligence (AI), new weapons such as a pistol crossbow, ''buddy" AI that will accomplish tasks that the player can't, as well as more secret areas to find and explore.

As with the original Medal of Honor, the producers sought council from numerous outside sources to make the game as historically authentic and realistic as possible. To ensure Medal of Honor Underground adequately reflects the ideals and integrity of the prestigious Medal of Honor, DreamWorks turned to Capt. Paul Bucha, past president of the Congressional Medal of Honor Society. In addition, Capt. Dale Dye, who served as technical consultant on the original game, again worked with the Medal of Honor Underground team developing levels for the game, including the crucial details of Manon's clandestine mission against Erwin ''the Desert Fox" Rommel and his forces in North Africa. The DreamWorks team also trained with Capt. Dye's firm Warriors Inc., in the Southern California desert -- this time gaining knowledge on small squad tactics and advanced grenade combat.

In order for the game to authentically portray the experience of women in the French Resistance as well as the OSS, producers contacted and met with Elizabeth McIntosh, author of Sisterhood of Spies, Margaret Weitz, author of Sisters in the Resistance, and French Resistance veteran and author of Spyglass: An Autobiography, Helene Adams-Deschamps. Through the inspiration of these individuals, Electronic Arts and DreamWorks aim to ensure that Medal of Honor Underground skillfully and accurately portrays the heroic contribution of women during the course of World War II.

Key gameplay features that will help Medal of Honor Underground deliver an overall enjoyable gaming experience include:

- Seven missions in which the player must accomplish specific objectives and goals in order to succeed and advance.
- Six all new authentic World War II era weapons for the player to utilize. These include a German sniper rifle and a pistol crossbow.
- Over 22 levels of fully realized and recreated 3-D locations throughout Europe.
- Smarter Artificial Intelligence enemy types, including motorcycles, tanks and half-tracks that the enemy will utilize to

their advantage.

- A special "buddy AI" in human form that will accomplish tasks the player can't, like safe cracking or helping to fight enemies.
- Special "disguise" mode that allows players to put on an inconspicuous ambulance driver uniform or assume the identity of a press photographer and move unnoticed through German encampments.
- Highly destructible and interactive environments designed to illustrate the ravages of war and be used as part of the player's overall strategy.
- Sound effects by Medal of Honor sound designer Erik Kraber.
- Original music soundtrack featuring an evocative orchestral score by award-winning Medal of Honor composer Michael Giacchino.
- Actual WWII film footage to help immerse the player in the era.

THQ Announces 'MTV Sports: T.J. Lavin's Ultimate BMX'

Two-Time X-Games BMX Dirt Champion T.J. Lavin
Signed as Featured Rider

THQ Inc. announced "'MTV Sports: T.J. Lavin's Ultimate BMX" for the PlayStation game console and Game Boy Color.

Additionally, THQ has signed two-time X-Games BMX dirt champion, T.J. Lavin, as the featured rider for the game. "'MTV Sports: T.J. Lavin's Ultimate BMX" will be the first title in THQ's BMX series and is set for a worldwide release in the fall of 2000.

In "'MTV Sports: T.J. Lavin's Ultimate BMX," players compete in both single and two-player modes as one of 10 professional BMX riders, including T.J. Lavin and Tim "'Fuzzy" Hall. First place wins in each of BMX's three core disciplines -- dirt, vert and street -- guarantee riders a spot in the MTV BMX Finals.

Each first place win unlocks new and more complex terrain as well as prize money for equipment upgrades. Throughout competition, players will learn to master more than 50 separate land and air tricks -- including 360(Degree) tailwhips, crooked grinds and can-cans. "'MTV Sports: T.J. Lavin's Ultimate BMX" will also feature some of the most ground-breaking bands in punk rock, hip hop and alternative music.

"'T.J. Lavin is one of the biggest stars of BMX, one of the fastest-growing sports in the extreme sports category," said Germaine Gioia, vice president, licensing, THQ. "'The increasing popularity of the sport, coupled with our innovative and fun game design, positions THQ very well for the launch of our BMX series this fall."

"'The growth of all three BMX disciplines since I started competing five years ago is unbelievable," stated T.J. Lavin, BMX dirt champion. "'I'm really excited about participating in the development of the game because it is such a great way to bring the excitement of the sport to my fans."

Lavin is one of the most charismatic athletes on the alternative sports circuit. His 1999 and 1997 gold medal wins at ESPN's X Games reached 76 million homes. Lavin is a multiple champion on the DK Dirt Circuit and the American Bicycle Association King of Dirt tours. He is a vocal pro-education and anti-drug advocate who serves as a great role model for teens and kids.

Acclaim Sports Tackles All-New Terrain With First ATV Title For the PlayStation-R- Game Console

Acclaim Sports announced it will release ATV: Quad Power Racing, the first ATV-based videogame for the PlayStation game console this August.

ATV: Quad Power Racing will feature 12 outdoor tracks with mountain, snow and desert terrain. Tracks will be complete with obstacles, short cuts and jumps on circuit-based and natural layouts. Players can choose from 6 quad riders and 12 quad bikes, each with four wheel independent suspension and its own individual statistics including top speed, suspension and grip. Exciting arcade gameplay enables quads to power slide, roll-over, crash and display damage from physical action between riders. ATV: Quad Power Racing also features 4 gameplay modes: Single Race; Time Attack; 2-Player; and Championship Mode, where players can choose to race as either Amateur or Pro.

"This game will provide thrills and excitement to gamers of all abilities," said Steve Felsen, Acclaim Brand Director. "With its realistic physics, players get to experience the true feeling of driving an ATV."

ATV: Quad Power Racing is being developed by European based Climax Studio and will carry a suggested retail price of \$29.99.

Electronic Arts is Back In --And Out Of-- the Ring With WCW Mayhem for the Gameboy Color System

Electronic Arts, the world's leading interactive entertainment publisher that elevated the wrestling bar last year with its "in and out of the ring" feature in WCW Mayhem for the console platforms, is following suit with the release of WCW Mayhem for the Gameboy Color Video Game System. WCW Mayhem is the only Gameboy Color wrestling game to date that features link-support that allows head-to-head wrestling between two players for added fun and arcade-oriented action. WCW Mayhem will be body slamming its way to Gameboy Color starting this month.

The WCW Mayhem series stems from the exclusive, long-term partnership for interactive entertainment game titles between Electronic Arts and World Championship Wrestling Inc. (WCW), providers of power-packed family sports entertainment. Based on the world of WCW and its well-known roster of professional wrestlers like Sting and Goldberg, WCW Mayhem for the Gameboy Color delivers an over the top, arcade game experience full of exciting brawls and insane chaos. Similar to its PlayStation game console and Nintendo 64 counterparts released last fall, WCW Mayhem for the Gameboy Color offers fast, action-packed professional wrestling both in and out of the ring. Pummel your opponent under the spotlight of the ring or take them

backstage for some serious out of the ring mayhem.

The game features three different environments: main arena, locker room and alley. The main arena-based matches will feature classic, WCW-style wrestling action in and around a ring. Upon entering the locker room and alley locations, these backstage arenas will initially be seen through a black and white security camera that will quickly switch to an actual in-game camera view. Adding to the game's intense action is the ability to pick up and strategically use a chair against opponents for added damage that is displayed on the "energy meter." Once an opponent's meter is colored red, which indicates low energy, the player can attempt to execute a finishing move to win the match... and ultimately the WCW World Heavyweight Champion title.

Gamers can grapple as or against a total of 12 top wrestlers, including: Goldberg, Sting, Hollywood Hogan, Kevin Nash, Bam Bam Bigelow, Ric Flair, Bret Hart, Randy Savage, Booker T, Diamond Dallas Page, Buff Bagwell and Lex Luger. Like that of their real-life counterparts, each of the wrestlers will have a set of unique moves, ring entrances, signature taunts and finishing moves like Goldberg's "Jackhammer" and Diamond Dallas Page's "Diamond-Cutter."

Test Drive Le Mans Gets the Green Light to Head to Stores This Week for the PlayStation

Infogrames North America, Inc. announced that its 24-Hour racing simulation, Test Drive Le Mans, will begin shipping to stores this week for the PlayStation Game Console.

Test Drive Le Mans is currently available for the personal computer and will also be available for the Nintendo Game Boy Color in June 2000.

"Test Drive Le Mans is a game of endurance and skill," said Laddie Ervin, director of Marketing for Sports and Racing at Infogrames North America, Inc. "It's not just a racing game; Test Drive Le Mans seamlessly blends strategy and pure adrenaline-pumping action."

Test Drive Le Mans delivers a realistic racing sensation at heart stopping speeds of up to 200 mph. Test Drive Le Mans, the officially licensed game of the 24 Heures du Mansfi, offers an accurate recreation of the world-famous Le Mans circuit track as well as five other Le Mans tracks. Tracks run through city streets and include Maison Blanche, Tertre Rouge, Bugatti, Arnage, Antares and Mulsanne.

Players can choose from three modes of play including Arcade, Championship or Le Mans 24 Hours. Players can participate in an actual 24-Hour race, or they can simulate the 24-Hour race by choosing time-compressed 12 minute, 24 minute or one hour modes.

Capturing the true essence of Le Mans racing with its around-the-clock, day-to-night-to-day lighting conditions, Test Drive Le Mans also provides realistic nighttime, weather and surface effects, made possible by an advanced real-time 3D lighting model.

With up to 12 cars competing in each race, players can expect the same challenges that real Le Mans drivers face when their tires lose traction and gas and oil levels drop, forcing them to pit their vehicles.

Test Drive Le Mans offers three distinct competition classes including GT1, GT2 and Prototype classes. The game offers more than 20 licensed racing teams:

Prototype	Team BMW Motorsport, Courage Competition, J-B Giesse, Joest Racing, Kremer Racing, La Filiere, Philippe Gache, Pilot Racing.
GT1	J-B Giesse, Lister Cars, Nissan Motorsports, Panoz Motorsports Inc. (including Panoz Hybrid), Roock Racing, Toyota Motor Sports.
GT2	Augusta Racing, Chamberlain Engineering, Chrysler Team Oreca (Viper), Konrad Motorsport, Larbre Competition, Marcos, Cirtek.

Test Drive Le Mans for the PlayStation Game Console will support two-player split-screen and includes Dual Shock and Analog controller support.

Developed by Eutechnyx and published by Infogrames, Test Drive Le Mans for the PlayStation will be available at an estimated retail price of \$29.99. For more information visit the web site at www.tdlemans.com.

Casper Marks 60th Birthday With Spooktacular Fun On PlayStation From Sound Source Interactive

Sound Source Interactive Inc. announced that it will release the brand new 'Casper, Friends Around the World' game for the PlayStation as part of Casper's 60th birthday celebration.

The game was being showcased May 11th through the 13th at the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3Expo) in the Sound Source Interactive booth, South Hall No. 1346.

'With the increase in demand for entertainment titles targeted to the under 12 market for PlayStation, and the highly successful Casper franchise, 'Casper, Friends Around the World' is sure to be a hit on this popular console system," said Vincent Bitetti, chairman and interim chief executive officer of Sound Source Interactive.

He continued, 'We look forward to partnering with Harvey in celebrating Casper's 60th birthday and his debut on the PlayStation."

'Harvey has big plans to celebrate with Casper this year, including a CGI direct-to-video film slated for December entitled 'Casper's Haunted Christmas,'" said Rick Mischel, president of The Harvey Entertainment Company.

Casper celebrates his 60th birthday on Halloween 2000 and Harvey Entertainment has planned 6 months of festivities including merchandise, movies, parties and promotions. The celebration kicked off with the announcement that Casper has become the official mascot in the Coast Guard's national campaign to halt the flow of illegal drugs.

Exploring the World With Casper ...

Casper sets out to rescue his ``fleshie" friends after the evil ghost Jarmant has banished them to the pages of a geography book. While traveling through 11 exotic locations including Hollywood, Paris, Italy, Egypt, China, South America, Moscow, India and more, players see the world, collect tokens, and fight off all of those ghastly ghouls. But players must beware because Jarmant is no ordinary evil spirit, and Casper will need to call on all of his ghostly abilities to defeat the boss and his evil spooks!

Developed by Realtime Associates for Sound Source Interactive, Casper is targeted to kids aged 5 to 8 years old and is scheduled for release in Q4 of 2000.

VM Labs and Hasbro Interactive Ink Multi-Title
Software Deal for NUON Interactive DVD Games

Hasbro Titles To Target Mainstream Audiences
Through NUON-Enhanced DVD Players

VM Labs announced the signing of a multi-title agreement as part of a strategic initiative to bring Hasbro Interactive game properties to VM Labs' NUON platform. The deal re-affirms Hasbro's support for the NUON platform. The agreement also marks both companies' commitment to bringing games to mainstream audiences.

``We believe new audiences will be attracted to electronic gaming through the NUON-enhanced DVD players," said John Hurlbut, general manager, Hasbro Interactive, ``and Hasbro's properties are ones that are easy to pick-up and familiar to play. The appeal of NUON to the non-traditional video gamer fits well with our all-family strategy, and our alliance with VM Labs allows us to bring our interactive products to a broader audience than ever before."

Hasbro and VM Labs are developing a number of NUON titles from Hasbro's stable of well-known properties, the first of which will be the classic arcade game Tempest and two board game favorites' The Game of Life and Monopoly. These first titles are expected to ship this year, with additional Hasbro titles to be made available on the NUON platform in future.

``Hasbro has always been the ideal software partner for the launch of NUON," said Bill Rehbock, vice president of third party development, VM Labs. ``They are a proven leader in family entertainment and leisure activities and have an exceptional understanding of our target audience, the mainstream gamer."

DVD International, as part of a separate agreement, will distribute the initial Hasbro titles. ``The relationship capitalizes on the strengths of each of the partners--Hasbro's heritage of true family entertainment, VM Labs expertise to create NUON renditions of the properties, and DVD International's knowledge of the DVD distribution channel," according to Mr. Rehbock. VM Labs is dedicated to bringing interactive entertainment, including games, movies, music and the Internet to the living room through its NUON technology, embedded in digital video devices such as DVD players and set-top boxes.

Radio Wireless Gaming and PS2 DVD Control in One Product

Eleven Engineering Announces Next in AIRPLAY Product Family:
AIRPLAY2 Radio Wireless Dual Analog and Shock Controller for
Playstation and Playstation 2 Game Consoles.

AIRPLAY2 will be compatible with both PlayStation and PlayStation 2 and brings several key technologies to console gaming controllers:

Radio Comm.	DVD Control (PS2)	Multi-Player	Dual Analog & Shock
IMD Appearance	Quad Triggers	Auto Pause	High-Pivot D-Pad

''Gamers' expectations have markedly increased over the past three years," says John Sobota, CEO of Eleven Engineering. ''Until recently, innovations in controllers have lagged advances in console hardware and game software. The AIRPLAY family of products is designed to address that -- to exceed the expectations of the new gaming demographic, and especially the adult players. AIRPLAY2 combines DUAL ANALOG JOYSTICKS AND SHOCK features with the excellence of RADIO WIRELESS gaming, allowing users to play without wires from up to 25 feet away. Both AIRPLAY2 and the original AIRPLAY also deliver the convenience of WIRELESS DVD MOVIE CONTROL on PlayStation 2. Consumer interest in PlayStation 2's DVD movie capability is very high, however, consumers will want reliable wireless control of the DVD function. And clearly, people are looking for the '2-fer' -- they don't want another single-duty remote control cluttering up the coffee table. Eleven's customers now have TWO compelling reasons to purchase AIRPLAY products for PS2."

Eleven's original product, AIRPLAY, pioneered RADIO WIRELESS gaming on PlayStation / PlayStation 2 earlier this year with its market launch in the USA on February 17, 2000. RADIO WIRELESS is considered by many in the industry to be the most appropriate communications technology for video gaming. The video gaming application is intolerant of delays and/or breaks in communication, making RADIO WIRELESS a much more desirable solution than competing infrared light technologies that suffer from shadowing. Approved for sale by FCC and Industry Canada, AIRPLAY is the first and only RADIO WIRELESS controller for PlayStation and PlayStation 2 presently on the market in North America.

AIRPLAY has won multiple awards and has been the subject of major media attention. A long list of complimentary reviews includes TIME MAGAZINE, an appearance on NBC's TODAY SHOW and positive industry recognition in GAMEWEEK and GAMES BUSINESS magazines. AIRPLAY for PlayStation / PlayStation 2 is available in the USA and Canada at Electronics Boutique, Blockbuster Canada, coming soon to select Toys R Us Canada stores, on the web at UGO (www.ugo.com), from Eleven (www.airplay.ca or toll free: 877/525-5775) plus others.

''AIRPLAY is a growing product family protected by a growing arsenal of patents pending," explains Sobota. ''On May 1, BLOCKBUSTER Canada and Eleven launched a massive coast-to-coast promotion for AIRPLAY. AIRPLAY2 will ship in Q4 of this year. Eleven is also developing AIRPLAY FOR NUON for Motorola's Streamaster set-top box and for NUON-enhanced DVD players including those already announced by Samsung and Toshiba."

THQ Inc. announced the release of ``Triple Play 2001" for Game Boy Color.

Available for the first time on the handheld system, ``Triple Play 2001" offers a comprehensive baseball game for fans of all ages. Licensed by Electronic Arts and developed by Handheld Games, ``Triple Play 2001" is now available at major retail outlets nationwide.

``As the No. 1 third-party publisher for Game Boy Color, THQ is pleased to add another quality title from the EA SPORTS brand to our comprehensive line of Game Boy Color products," said Alison Locke, senior vice president, marketing and sales, THQ.

``Triple Play 2001" for Game Boy Color features the most updated rosters from every team in Major League Baseballfi and complete batting and pitching statistics for each player. The game also features 30 authentic ballparks and 32 teams, including both current National League and American League All-Star teams. Game Boy Color enthusiasts can also look forward to new home-plate animations and scoreboard effects.

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

'Love Bug' Takes New Forms to Deceive Users

Copypcat variants of the ``Love Bug" virus burrowed their way into computers systems around the world on Friday, a day after the most widespread cyber-attack ever wreaked havoc on business and government operations.

The virus, first detected in Asia on Thursday, spread rapidly, forcing network administrators to shut down electronic mail systems at major companies and penetrating the Pentagon, the Central Intelligence Agency and the British Parliament.

The new variants of the viruses take the form of Mother's Day gift notices, jokes and even anti-virus warnings.

The original virus, tagged ``ILOVEYOU," works by enticing e-mail recipients to open an attached letter, only to cripple their e-mail systems.

Upon opening the attachment using Microsoft software such as the Outlook program, it sends a copy of the virus to everyone in the user's address book and seeks to destroy a variety of files throughout a computer network, including picture and music files.

The latest variants on the virus is possibly the most devious of all. One e-mail message has the words ``Virus ALERT" in the subject line and the

body of the message poses as letter that starts ``Dear Symantec customer," said Carey Nachenberg, chief researcher at Symantec Corp.'s anti-virus research center.

The note offers the reader a false virus remedy as a file attachment. When the attached file is opened, it activates the virus, Nachenberg said.

``We have a copy of the virus already," Nachenberg told Reuters in an interview, noting that it has already notified customers through its Web site and provided software to fix it.

``This type of spoofing is common," he said. But he noted that the widespread nature of these viruses was by no means common. ``We're keeping our customers informed." Symantec is one of the largest makers of anti-virus software.

The other variant is a similar one with the words "Dangerous Virus Warning" in the subject line, researchers say, but without a reference to Symantec in the message.

In another new version of the virus designed to spoil the upcoming ``Mother's Day" holiday that will be celebrated in the United States on May 14, a variant of LoveLetter sends e-mails that appear to be a confirmation of an electronic gift order.

Another variant appears to have originated in Lithuania, in which the subject line reads, ``Susitikem shi vakara kavos puodukui." In Lithuanian, the sentence translates into: ``Let's meet this evening for coffee."

And still another has ``fwd: Joke" in the subject line and an attached file called ``Very Funny.vbs," which when opened has a similar impact as the ``Love Bug."

The Defense Department revealed on Friday it had become one of the most noteworthy victims of the virus, which contaminated at least two classified U.S. military computer systems. The problems were quickly isolated and no damage was done, a Pentagon spokesman said.

But even though the number of virus strains have increased, already infecting tens of millions of computers, companies that specialize in protecting computers from such sabotage say this latest Internet scourge is starting to abate.

``There have been maybe 10 times fewer reports (of computer virus infection) today than yesterday," said Sal Viveros, group manager for Network Associates' Total Virus Defense. "I think people are more aware of what to look for. They know not to open attachments from people they don't recognize."

``We've made great strides since the outbreak early Thursday," Viveros said. ``By Monday, it should be pretty much under control."

He added that more people have made an effort to get the most recent anti-virus software installed.

Nevertheless, security experts said the Love Bug was far more devastating than last year's bug named Melissa, with losses now counting in the billions of dollars from damaged data and the distractions of fighting the software scourge.

About 45 million computers around the world have been affected by various strains of the virus, according to one estimate from Computer Economics, a research firm in Carlsbad, Calif.

''We estimate \$2.61 billion of damage has been done worldwide," said Samir Bhavnani, a research analyst with Computer Economics. ''By Wednesday, the total can reach \$10 billion by Wednesday. We see damages growing by \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion a day until the virus is eradicated."

Other experts said actual damage estimates would be harder to pin down.

Philippine police sources said the author of the ''Love Bug" may be a 23-year-old man living in a Manila suburb, but computer security experts cautioned that computer hackers could write in clues to mislead investigators.

Manila police were probing the case after a request from the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation. A Manila Internet service provider, Supernet, had earlier said the virus appeared to have first spread from two of its e-mail accounts.

Meanwhile, in Washington, U.S. Republican Sen. Robert Bennett raised questions on Friday whether the government's top security watchdog was caught napping when the ''Love Bug" surfaced.

The National Infrastructure Protection Center, the top U.S. cyber-cop led by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, is responsible for detecting and deterring cyber-attacks on federal computer systems.

It failed to post an alert about the ''Love Bug" on its Web site until 11 a.m. (1500 GMT) Thursday, up to 12 hours after the harm began spreading by e-mail in Asia.

The outbreak of new variations of the virus have kept software companies on their toes. Business software maker Computer Associates International said it was relatively easy to create new strains of the virus.

''There's a potential that anyone who receives this virus can go to the Internet and (find) tools to change codes within the virus program that can give the e-mail or the attachment a new name," said Simon Perry, vice president for security products at Computer Associates International Inc. The Islandia, N.Y.-based company supplies anti-virus programs among its range of software for big businesses.

Network Associates' Viveros said there were some attempts to change the way the viruses work, but thus far they have been unsuccessful.

The damage is limited to users of the Microsoft Windows operating system, said Gene Hodges, president of McAfee.com, a maker of anti-virus software and a unit of Network Associates. "We've seen no evidence of affected users of Apple, Linux or Unix operating systems," he added.

Shares of companies that provide computer and network security extended their gains Friday, as users and network managers were reminded of the need for protection after this week's rash of computer viruses.

Accompanied by FBI agents, Philippine police raided an apartment in Manila on Monday and arrested a bank employee who along with his girlfriend is suspected of links to the "ILOVEYOU" virus that has overwhelmed computer networks around the world.

But relatives of the man, Reomel Ramones, said they believe the real culprit may be a third person who lived in the apartment - the girlfriend's unemployed sister, who recently graduated from a computer school that a U.S. security firm has linked to the "Love Bug" virus.

Investigators entered the apartment in Pandacan, a lower-middle-class Manila neighborhood, and seized computer diskettes, wires, telephones and other computer accessories.

No one was home at the time of the raid, but Ramones later returned and was arrested by agents from the country's National Bureau of Investigation. His girlfriend was contacted by investigators and promised to appear at NBI headquarters, NBI chief Federico Opinion said. He did not give her name, and her sister's whereabouts were not immediately known.

Local radio reports said Ramones denied any involvement with the virus. An investigator said Ramones had "opted to remain silent."

The virus has caused a flood of e-mails with the subject line "ILOVEYOU" to course through computer systems in more than 20 countries since it appeared last week. When opened, the virus can destroy graphics and other saved files. Several variations appeared soon after - one masquerading as an e-mail joke, another as a receipt for a Mother's Day gift. Several FBI agents are in the Philippines cooperating in the search for the virus programmer.

No charges were immediately filed against Ramones, Opinion said. By law, charges must be filed within 36 hours.

Philippine investigators were faced with a difficult task because their country has few laws tailored to high-tech computer crimes. Opinion said they plan to use a law against improper use of commerce "access devices" such as credit cards, account numbers and passwords to charge the virus creators. The law carries a maximum penalty of twice the amount obtained by fraud plus up to 20 years in prison.

"This is a new type of crime," Opinion said, adding that investigators were led to the apartment by informants.

At a news conference Monday in Washington, Attorney General Janet Reno sidestepped the question of whether those taken into custody in the Philippines were suspected of actually creating the virus.

"They've presently been questioning individuals in connection with the investigation. We continue to pursue all relevant leads," she said.

Although Ramones works in the computer department of a bank, he is an accounting graduate and his specialty is computer hardware, not software, his relatives said. They said the computer in the apartment was almost always locked in the room of the third resident, the 23-year-old sister of Ramones' girlfriend. The sister recently graduated in computer engineering from the Philippines' AMA Computer College.

For several days, information culled from various Philippine Internet

service providers has indicated that the virus programmer was a 23-year-old living in Pandacan who claimed to be male. Ramones is said to be in his mid-30s.

A U.S. computer security company, ICSA.net, said comparisons of the 'ILOVEYOU' virus with a password-stealing program written earlier indicate the author was a student at AMA Computer College.

Michelle Navarro, the school's dean of students, said she was unaware of any student having created a computer virus. She said the school has 10,000 computer students.

In a statement, the school said it will 'never condone any act which will result in the improper use of information technology to the detriment of society.'

In Japan, meanwhile, tens of thousands of people returned to work Monday from a weeklong holiday to find the virus that had swept around the world waiting in their computers. Government officials and antivirus software companies issued emergency warnings to computer users not to open suspicious-looking files in their e-mails.

When the rest of the world was struggling to cope with the fast-moving virus last week, Japan was virtually unaffected because most companies and government offices were closed for the 'golden week' holidays that began April 29.

As of early Monday, the number of infected files in Japan reached 73,000, according to Akitsu Hirasawa, a spokeswoman for Trend Micro Inc., a leading Tokyo-based antivirus software firm.

Microsoft Rejects Breakup, Seeks More Hearings

Microsoft Corp. on Wednesday asked the court hearing its antitrust trial to reject a government plan to divide the software giant in two, proposing restrictions on its business practices instead.

District Court Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson had ordered Microsoft to submit its own plan after ruling April 3 that the company broke U.S. antitrust law by abusing its monopoly in operating systems for personal computers.

Microsoft asked for summary judgement disposing of the government's breakup proposal. If the judge insisted on considering the breakup plan, then further hearings should be held starting in December, it said.

The trial had failed to find that there would be greater competition for operating systems if Microsoft had acted differently, the company said.

'The government's adventurous request to split Microsoft into two companies should be rejected as a matter of law,' Microsoft submitted to the judge.

The U.S. Justice Department and 17 states called on April 28 for Microsoft to be split into a personal computer operating systems business and a separate applications software firm that would have such assets as Microsoft Office and the Internet Explorer browser.

But Microsoft said the problems found by Judge Jackson could be addressed by restrictions on its business conduct lasting just four years.

The company offered to give computer makers more leeway to change the appearance of its Windows operating system, including permission to hide the icon for Microsoft's Internet Explorer browser.

And Microsoft would be barred from canceling Windows license agreements with computer makers who shipped products with non-Microsoft software, such as another browser that could serve as a platform for running other programs.

Nor could Microsoft trade valuable space on the Windows "desktop" based on a firm's agreement to limit distribution of non-Microsoft platform software.

Microsoft would also provide adequate technical information on Windows to other software firms to enable production of compatible software, without conditioning that access on limiting non-Microsoft platform distribution.

Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal said Microsoft's proposed remedies seemed clearly inadequate on first review.

'Microsoft is in denial. It denies doing anything wrong and is offering nothing new," Blumenthal said in a statement.

'Obviously this is merely an effort to delay the determination of a remedy," another government attorney said.

The landmark case stems from an antitrust complaint filed by the government in May 1998, charging Microsoft with illegally using its monopoly power to destroy Netscape, a Web browser with operating system aspirations.

The trial began in October 1998 and may still have months to run even before the appeals process begins.

Judge Jackson's current timetable calls for a government response May 17, followed by a hearing May 24, but Microsoft said it will need more time because the government has introduced new material supporting its argument for a break-up of the firm.

'We are working to try to resolve this case as quickly as possible, in a fair and reasonable manner," said Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates.

'We believe there is no basis in this case for the government's unprecedented breakup proposal, and we are hopeful that the Court will dismiss this excessive demand immediately so that the case can move forward much more rapidly," Gates said in a statement.

Microsoft Spells Out Proposed Remedies

Microsoft Corp., responding to a judge's order that it propose remedies for violating the nation's antitrust laws, Wednesday proposed the following restrictions on its behavior. All would expire in four years. The proposal:

-- Prohibits Microsoft from canceling Windows license agreements because a personal computer maker ships non-Microsoft software that can serve as a ''platform" on which to run other software. It would also permit computer makers to hide Microsoft's Internet Explorer browser icon.

-- Prohibits Microsoft from trading promotion of a firm's services on its ''desktop" in return for the company's agreement to limit distribution of non-Microsoft platform software.

-- Requires Microsoft to provide adequate technical information to software writers so they can design software that runs on Windows, without conditioning access on their agreement to limit distribution of non-Microsoft platform software.

-- Prohibits Microsoft from conditioning the release of software running on non-Microsoft products such as Apple products, in return for an agreement to limit its distribution or promotion of non-Microsoft platform software.

-- Requires Microsoft to license older versions of Windows without increasing the price after newer versions are released.

Internet Fraud Complaint Center Is Launched

The United States launched a new online fraud investigative center on Monday to tackle the fast-growing problem of Internet fraud, a new area of crime affecting hundreds of people each day in America.

Announcing the new Internet Fraud Complaint Center, U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno said that in 1999, Americans filed nearly 18,000 Internet fraud complaints with the Federal Trade Commission ranging from problems with online auctions to sales of computer hardware and software.

At the Securities and Exchange Commission, between 200-300 complaints were received each day about possible securities fraud schemes on the Internet, Reno said.

''The Internet Fraud Complaint Center allows consumers who suspect Internet fraud to share that information with law enforcement, quickly and efficiently," Reno told a news conference.

She said the center, which will initially be staffed by 12 FBI agents and about 25 people from the National White Collar Crime Center (NW3C), will offer law enforcement at the federal, state and local level. ''It will be a one-stop shopping approach to identifying Internet fraud schemes and referring them to the proper law enforcement agencies," the attorney general said.

The online center will not deal with problems such as computer viruses, like the so-called ''Love Bug" virus released last week that slowed computers and shut down e-mail systems around the world. This problem is being dealt with by another department.

A young Philippine couple, both bank workers, have been named as suspects in the ''Love Bug" virus and the man was arrested after a search of their Manila apartment.

The FBI is also investigating the case and Reno said her department would continue to work closely with the authorities in the Philippines.

''We are going to follow every lead," she added.

Asked whether Philippines laws were adequate to tackle the case, Reno said she would not comment on the specifics but that it was important to have common international legislation to deal with such problems.

''It will be very important that we have the same sheet of music to play from," she said.

The new Internet fraud center is based in Morgantown, West Virginia, but most users are likely to file complaints online via the ''secure" web site at www.ifccfbi.gov.

FBI assistant director, Ruben Garcia, said once a complaint was filed, it would be passed on to the relevant authority, which would act immediately.

Garcia said fraud committed on the Internet posed more of a challenge than fraud schemes traditionally dealt with by the FBI.

''Anyone in the privacy of their own home can create a pervasive vehicle for fraud with minimal expenses. With the push of a single button, those committing fraud can send out electronic mail to millions of potential victims," he said.

The fastest-growing age group online was over 50 years old and this group spent 19 percent more time surfing the web than any other age category, Garcia said, making them a prime target of Internet frauds.

''They have more assets available for discretionary uses such as investment opportunities and they may be more likely to be sought by online fraudulent schemes," he said.

NW3C Chairman Glen Gainer said the difference in fraud committed on the Internet was that the perpetrator could literally ''vanish" leaving consumers wondering where they could turn to for help.

''There is a challenge out there unlike anything before. At all levels of government we must boldly respond to this challenge," Gainer said.

National borders had ''lost their meaning" when it came to tackling Internet crime, he said, adding that the Internet complaints center made it possible for anyone, anywhere to lodge complaints.

Zip Drive Gets FireWire

Iomega on Wednesday announced that it is shipping a FireWire adapter for the 250MB USB Zip drive. The \$79.95 adapter allows the drive to be connected to one of the Mac's FireWire ports.

The adapter plugs into the Zip drive's 50-pin PCMCIA card connector. When connected to a FireWire-equipped desktop Mac, the drive will draw its power from the FireWire bus, so the drive's AC adapter is not needed. However, when connected to a FireWire-equipped PowerBook, the drive

requires the AC adapter.

Iomega's Todd Schuelke told MacWEEK that the USB connection transfers data at an average of 900KBps, compared with sustained speeds of about 2.3MBps for the FireWire adapter.

The adapter, now available online from Iomega, will also be sold through retail outlets.

Windows Me One Step Closer to Release

Microsoft is nearing completion of Windows Me, according to beta testers, and is expected to release the new consumer operating system sometime in June.

An early release candidate, or nearly complete test version of the operating system, was released to beta testers earlier this week, the software giant confirmed, but declined to comment on the implications for the release schedule of the product.

At this point, however, it is clear that Microsoft is nearing the completion of the Windows Me beta process, which is designed to discover and fix bugs and holes before the product is released.

Windows Me, formerly known by its code-name Millennium, is the next operating system from Microsoft. Designed solely for home users, the OS is the third version of Windows 98 and the last product based on the Windows 9X code base.

The development of Windows Me has been somewhat tumultuous. Originally envisioned as the consumer version of Windows NT, Microsoft dramatically scaled back its focus as part of a decision to extend Windows 98 into a family of products.

Last month, the company reversed its original plan and decided to include networking technologies from Novell that had been initially dropped in favor of Microsoft networking products. Microsoft included the Novell software after an outcry from small-office users and gamers.

After Windows Me, Microsoft will go to work on Whistler, the code name for the next version of Windows 2000, designed for both home and corporate users. Windows 2000 code is thought to be more stable and reliable than Windows 95 or Windows 98, and Microsoft may be speeding up the release schedule of Windows Me to focus on Whistler, according to sources.

In the meantime, Windows Me is a stop-gap measure, targeted at supporting a variety of technologies that have become popular since Windows 98, Second Edition was released last year. The OS focuses on home networking and digital music and video support, among other areas.

Typically, the official release of a product comes five to six weeks after the first release candidate. Since this is an "early" release candidate, according to Microsoft, the final introduction of Windows Me could still be further off. Microsoft declined to comment on the official launch date of the product.

Microsoft shipped the third and final beta to testers last month.

The reaction to the latest versions of the beta code have been mixed thus far, according to BetaNews.com, a Microsoft enthusiast site. "BetaNews has received mixed feedback on the subject, with some Windows Me (release candidate) users touting perfection and others still finding it buggy," the site said.

Other new features of Windows Me include:

- System Restore, which restores deleted critical system files
- Auto Update, which automatically downloads updates from the Windows Update site
- Home Networking Wizard, designed to simplify adding computers or peripherals to a home network
- Windows Image Acquisition, designed to simplify downloading and saving images from digital cameras
- Windows Movie Maker digital video editing software.

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